



# **City of Burien Proposed Annexation of North Highline**

## **Election: Nov. 6, 2012**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**1. What is annexation?**

Annexation is the process set by State law which enables cities to add land to their boundaries and expand in size. Annexation also allows residents and businesses in areas not governed by a city to join a city and receive city services.

**2. Why does Burien want to annex part of the North Highline Unincorporated Area?**

King County and its cities agree that all urban unincorporated areas in the County will eventually be absorbed into cities. It is believed that this may result in more efficient delivery of services and improved access to local decision-makers. In accordance with Washington State's Growth Management Act (GMA) and Countywide Planning Policies, Burien has been studying the most reasonable and financially responsible means to advance the goals of the Growth Management Act.

**3. What are the boundaries of the Proposed Annexation Area?**

The North Highline Annexation Area's northernmost boundary is generally the current Seattle City Limits east to Des Moines Memorial Drive, south to S. 96<sup>th</sup> Street, east to SR-599 (the current Tukwila City Limits), south to the current Burien City Limits, and west to Seola Beach Drive/30<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW. An interactive map showing the boundaries of the annexation areas may be viewed at [www.burienwa.gov/annexation](http://www.burienwa.gov/annexation). You can enter your address to find out if your property falls within that area.

**4. How were the boundaries determined?**

Since 2005, the City of Burien has initiated and participated in a number of activities that determined the current set of boundaries. These activities included:

- a. Numerous public hearings and conversations with citizen groups and individuals
- b. An independent fiscal analysis of the proposed North Highline Annexation
- c. A series of meetings with special purpose districts that serve the North Highline Area

**5. How much land is proposed for annexation and how would it affect the City's population?**

The land proposed for annexation is 2,045 acres. Approximately 17,400 persons would be added to Burien's population. Following annexation, Burien would grow to about 8,500 acres with a population of about 65,000.



**6. What is the annexation process?**

The City filed an annexation request in October 2011. The King County Boundary Review Board approved Burien's request to annex in February 2012. Next, registered voters within the proposed annexation area will have an opportunity to vote on the annexation at the November 6, 2012, General Election. If approved, the actual annexation would likely occur in 2013.

**7. What percentage of votes is necessary to approve the annexation?**

The annexation will require a simple majority to pass. Please remember, to be eligible to vote, you must be registered to vote at least 30 days in advance of an election.

**8. What happens to my government services after annexation?**

Upon annexation to the City of Burien, the annexed area would continue to be served by special districts and receive local services from the city or through a city contract with the county. Burien contracts sheriff and, district court services from the county.

Burien would provide additional services, including:

- Animal Control
- Building Permits
- Comprehensive Planning & Economic Development
- Human Services
- Police
- Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
- Road Maintenance
- Surface Water Management

**9. Will My Address Change from "Seattle" to "Burien" after Annexation?**

Not necessarily. Residents can use either "Seattle" or "Burien" in the address and mail will be delivered as long as the proper zip code is included.

**11. How is Burien governed?**

Burien has a Council-Manager form of Government. The council-manager form consists of an elected city council responsible for policy making, and a professional city manager, appointed by the council, who is responsible for administration.

The current City Council members are:

- Brian Bennett, Mayor
- Rose Clark, Deputy Mayor
- Jack Block, Jr.
- Bob Edgar
- Lucy Krakowiak
- Joan McGilton
- Jerry Robison



**11. Does my school district boundary change?**

No. School district boundaries are not affected by annexations.

## **Taxes**

**1. How would annexation affect taxes?**

The property tax rate will decrease from \$14.07 to \$13.74 per \$1,000 assessed value beginning the second year of annexation. For property with an assessed value of \$200,000, this would result in a reduction of \$65.

The City levies a 3% utility tax on electric and a 6% utility tax on cable, gas, garbage and telephone utilities. Seattle City Light customers in Burien also pay a special fee for undergrounding of utilities along 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. S. Based upon usage, the total increase in utility taxes and fees would be \$205 per year for the average household.

The combined overall change in property and utility taxes for the average household would be an increase of about \$140 per year.

**2. Will my property value increase with annexation?**

Real estate market conditions drive real property values. Assessed values, which are used to formulate annual property taxes, are applied by the King County Assessor's office, county-wide. This will continue to be the case if annexation occurs. To learn more about how the County values property and improvements, please visit

<http://www.metrokc.gov/assessor/RealProperty.htm>.

**3. Once annexed, when do City taxes show up on property tax bills?**

If the annexation is approved in the fall and if it is effective in April 2013, the City would levy its first tax on the annexed property in November 2013 and the tax levy would be on the 2014 tax bills.

**4. How will costs to businesses be impacted by annexation?**

Businesses in Burien pay an annual business license fee and a 0.05% Business & Occupation Tax. The cost for a retail business with gross receipts of \$250,000 and fewer than 40 employees would be:

- B & O Tax: \$125/year
- Business License: \$90/year

**5. What is the financial impact of the annexation on the City's overall budget?**





A recent independent financial analysis concluded that the cost to provide City services within the proposed annexation area would be offset by projected revenues - including the State sales tax credit for up to 10 years.

## **Streets and Surface Management (Public Works)**

### **1. What services does the Burien Public Works Department provide?**

The Burien Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the City's transportation and surface water management facilities. In addition, the Department is responsible for implementing the City Council-approved Capital Improvement Program by providing engineering, project management and technical services, using staff as well as design consulting firms.

### **2. If annexed, who will maintain the streets and alleys, including potholes and snow plowing?**

Burien's Public Works Department will be responsible for street repairs in the annexed areas and maintenance including plowing and sanding streets after a snowstorm. Priorities are based on traffic volumes and street grades. Many local residential streets are not plowed during any event. The City maintains an ice-sanding and snow-removal map identifying priority streets on its website. If annexed, streets in the potential annexation areas will be added to the City's weather-related street maintenance prioritization system.

The City also repairs potholes. Any resident can phone the Public Works Department the location of a pothole and City crews will repair it within two business days. To report a pothole, please call (206) 248-5521. If leaving a message, please indicate the specific location of the pothole (street, cross streets, etc.).

### **3. Who pays for street improvements?**

The City funds street capacity and safety improvements through a combination of City funds, developer fees, and grants. In addition, the City offers property owners the opportunity to finance infrastructure improvements on their street, such as installation of sidewalks, curbs and gutters through a local improvement district (LID). LIDs directly benefit property owners by increasing the value of their property to a degree equivalent to or greater than their financial investment.

### **4. How does the City of Burien plan for future improvements to roads?**

The City has a long-range planning process it uses to identify safety, capacity, and pavement preservation needs. The City uses a traffic model to project future traffic and plan for street improvements to accommodate that traffic. The City uses collision data, speed studies, and input from residents to identify safety needs. The City also produces the Transportation Master



Plan, a 20-year planning document, and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a 6-year project programming and financing plan. The TIP is updated annually and helps the City Council and staff prioritize projects for implementation. Upon annexation, the City would work with the annexed neighborhoods to put together a long range plan for street improvements.

- 5. What street improvements will be done immediately if the annexation is approved by voters?**
- Following annexation, the pavement condition of the streets will be rated to determine what pavement maintenance investments are needed. The needs will be prioritized and incorporated into the City's maintenance and street overlay program. Future capital street improvements will be identified and prioritized during the public process to update the City's Transportation Plan.

## **Public Safety**

### **Fire**

- 1. How will the annexation affect fire and emergency services?**

Currently fire and EMS services are provided by King County Fire District #11 (North Highline). In addition to the unincorporated area of North Highline, Fire District #11 is the current fire and emergency services provider to a portion of north Burien, by means of a service contract with King County Fire District #2 (Burien/Normandy Park). If annexation is approved, responsibility for fire and EMS services in the newly annexed area would transfer to District # 2. State law provides for the orderly transfer of service responsibility through statute. Service responsibility as well as asset and employee transfer statutes will ensure that services provided to the citizens currently served by either district will remain intact and uninterrupted.

### **Police**

- 1. Who will provide police service for my area?**

There will be a seamless transition of police services in the annexed area. The Burien Police Department currently contracts with the King County Sheriff's Office. Deputies that currently provide service will likely be the same with a simple change in uniforms and car markings.

- 2. How will my police service change?**

The annexed area will have at least the same level of service and possibly a slightly higher level. The close working relationship with the Sheriff's Office allows for a depth of service that covers both Burien and North Highline. The City of Burien also has a crime prevention program as well as drug, gang and property crime detectives. With our contract service, Burien also has the vast resources of King County Sheriff's Office to support the City.

## **Utilities**

- 1. Will my sewer or water provider change with annexation?**



No. The Burien Proposed Annexation Area will retain its current water and sewer service providers after annexation. The designated sewer service providers in the annexation area are the Southwest Suburban Sewer District and Valley View Sewer District. The water service providers will continue to be Water District 20, Water District 45 and Seattle Public Utilities.

**2. If I am on septic tank do I have to switch to sewer?**

Approval of the annexation will have no impact on the continued use of existing on-site disposal systems (septic tanks) which are operating in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

**3. How will my garbage service change?**

The garbage service provider for annexed property will not change. Waste Management has similar service contracts within the annexation area and the City of Burien. There could be slight service/pricing changes in the year following annexation. You can read more about the services provided at <http://www.wmnorthwest.com/>.

**4. I currently take my trash directly to the transfer station and do not have garbage service from a solid waste provider. Will garbage service be mandatory with annexation?**

The City of Burien does not require the mandatory use of Waste Management collection services. Property and business owners are responsible for properly storing garbage/refuse and for removing garbage/refuse at a similar rate as the service provided by Waste Management.

**5. Does a City have a utility tax?**

The City levies a 3% utility tax on electric and a 6% utility tax on cable, gas and telephone utilities. The utility tax charged on the utility goes to the general fund to provide services to the City, including street maintenance, public safety and other general services.

**6. What type of utility discount programs does the City offer?**

The City of Burien does not manage the utilities that serve Burien and the North Highline area. Both areas are served by special purpose districts, many of which offer discount programs.

- King County Water District No. 20 offers a Senior Citizen, Low Income, and Disabled Discount. Go to <http://www.kcwd20.com> for more information on the program.
- Southwest Suburban Sewer District has adopted a program to assist low income households within the district. Go to <http://www.swssd.com> for more information on the program.
- The Valley View Sewer District's Utility Assistance Program or "the Flush Fund" was created to help families in crisis with their sewer bill. Go to <http://www.valvue.com> for more information on the program.





## **Planning, Zoning and Permits**

### **1. How will the zoning on my property change?**

Upon annexation, the City of Burien would adopt an interim zoning map that would most likely apply the existing Burien zoning districts that are most comparable with King County's existing zoning in the annexation area. That means that if annexation is approved, the minimum lot sizes, setbacks, and permitted uses are likely to be similar, if not identical to the current zoning. Some exceptions may be made for zoning districts like R-8 and special overlay districts that currently exist in King County but not currently in Burien. Over time, the City would work with residents and business owners to prepare comprehensive plans and zoning maps for the annexed neighborhoods. Any proposed changes to zoning would be considered through an open public process. All decisions about comprehensive planning and zoning in the annexed neighborhoods will be made by the Burien City Council based on a recommendation by the Burien Planning Commission. This is the same process the City used following annexation of North Burien.

### **2. Will I be able to continue to build if I applied for a County construction permit before the annexation is effective?**

Yes. Completed construction permit applications submitted to the County prior to the effective date of the annexation will continue to be processed, reviewed and inspected under County codes and regulations provided the permit remains active and does not expire.

### **3. Where will I go to get licenses and permits?**

After annexation, land use and construction permits would be obtained from the City of Burien Permit Center, at Burien City Hall, 400 SW 152<sup>nd</sup> Street (3<sup>rd</sup> floor) in downtown Burien. We also offer many simple building permits online at [www.mybuildingpermit.com](http://www.mybuildingpermit.com).

### **4. Does Burien have a code enforcement program to address a specific problem or eyesore?**

The City has full-time code enforcement staff members who regularly respond to a variety of code enforcement concerns and who work with other members of City staff to take enforcement action where necessary. Citizens may file "Citizen Action Requests" in person at City Hall, over the phone or online.

### **5. How long will it take to get a building permit for a new house in Burien? How about for a remodel or addition to my house?**



You can expect comments on a permit application for a new house within four weeks of submitting a complete application for a new house. If a resubmittal is required, you can expect comments and a possible decision within another four weeks. For an addition or remodel, you can expect comments within three weeks of submitting a complete application. If a resubmittal is required, you can expect comments and a possible decision within another three weeks.

**6. What would happen to the medical marijuana dispensaries and adult-oriented stores currently in business in North Highline if annexation goes through?**

The City of Burien does not grant business licenses to medical marijuana dispensaries, because the sale of marijuana is illegal under state law.

Adult businesses would have to comply with the City’s business license and zoning regulations. If such businesses are located where they conform with King County zoning but not with City of Burien zoning, they would be grandfathered and allowed to continue in their current locations. However, future locations or expansions of adult businesses would only be allowed if they conform to the City’s zoning code.

**7. Are residents allowed to raise backyard chickens or other in Burien?**

Any combination of three domestic fowl and rabbits may be kept on any lot, with the exception of roosters which are not allowed. Domestic fowl includes but is not limited to chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys. For lots exceeding a certain size, more are allowed. For more information, see Burien Municipal Code 19.17.100 Keeping of Animals.

**Parks & Recreation**

**1. How would annexation affect public parks in the proposed annexation area?**  
 Parks within the proposed annexation areas that would be transferred to the City of Burien by King County include:

Name	Location (click for map)	Size	Facilities	
North Shorewood Park	<a href="#">SW 102nd St and 24th Ave SW</a>	6.26	Multi-Purpose Court	1
			Picnic Tables	3
			Play Equipment Area	1
			Equestrian Arena	1
White Center Heights Park	<a href="#">SW 102nd St and 7th Ave SW</a>	5.57	Picnic Areas	3
			Community Garden	1
			Stage and	1





			Amphitheater Walking trail Pond Bridge	1 1 1
Lakewood Park	<u>11050 10th Ave SW</u>	29.49	Parking lot Disc Golf Course Open Play Fields Picnic Shelters Play Equipment Areas Restroom Open Tennis Courts TAF Community Learning Center	2 1 3 3 1 1 2 1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41.32 acres</b>		

Parks in the North Highline area previously annexed by the City of Burien include:

Name	Location (click for map)	Size	Facilities
Puget Sound Park	<u>1st Ave S and 126th St SW</u>	5.00	Multi-Purpose Court Open Play Field Parking Lot Picnic Area Play Equipment Area Running Track
Salmon Creek Park	<u>SW 118th and 8th Ave SW</u>	4.58	Open Play Field Picnic Tables
Hazel Valley Park	<u>2nd Ave SW and 126th St</u>	2.86	Open Play Field Picnic Table
Arbor Lake Park	<u>S 124th St and 4th Ave S</u>	8.54	Bridge Play Equipment Area Open Play Field Picnic Area
Southern Heights Park	<u>S 120th St and 14th Ave S</u>	3.27	Open Play Field Play Equipment Area
Hilltop Park	<u>S 128th and 26th Ave S</u>	7.36	Open Play Field Picnic Tables
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31.61 acres</b>	

Under the management of the City of Burien Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department, the parks within the annexation area would receive the same levels of park maintenance and would be evaluated for play equipment and furnishing replacement. Master planning of these park properties may also be necessary. The City of Burien would evaluate park needs based on City standards.

## 2. How would recreation programs being offered in the proposed annexation area be impacted?

Recreation programs offered through King County Parks at the Field House in Steve Cox Park are managed by King County Parks.



As they have in the past, residents of the North Highline annexation area will continue to have access to the services of Burien's Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department, which provides preschool, youth, teen and adult leisure programs for those interested in fitness and wellness, cultural arts, sports, and special events. Numerous programs are also designed to provide social and recreational opportunities to senior citizens and those with special needs.

Based on the City's standards for program provision and analysis of potential residents' needs, additional youth programs and family special events may also be offered in the annexation area.

To learn more about the programs offered by the Burien Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department, visit its website at [www.BurienParks.net](http://www.BurienParks.net). You can also follow Burien Parks on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/BurienParks](https://www.facebook.com/BurienParks)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/BurienParks](https://www.twitter.com/BurienParks)).

**What will happen to the private parks in my subdivision that are owned and maintained by the homeowners' association?**

The private parks in your subdivision will continue to be owned and maintained by the homeowners' association.